

Chairboys Gas

*The Independent Magazine
by Supporters of
Wycombe Wanderers F.C.*

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THE PRICE OF SUCCESS



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Chairboys Gas

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When CHAIRBOYS GAS started back in 1986 it was never intended to act as a communication medium for the Club, but aimed to provide an outlet for supporters of Wycombe Wanderers to show their enthusiasm and dedication towards their Club and also to provide some much needed serious coverage of the non-League game. Three years on and we find ourselves continually relaying information on the Club that should be receiving more widespread coverage than this magazine can ever hope to achieve.

This issue contains a great deal of 'Club News' that has happened since the end of last season and until this break down in communication is resolved we will continue, as best we can, to bring the news that should be of interest to all Wycombe supporters.

Having said that there are some positive aspects to look forward to this season. The Club has announced a football in the community programme that will hopefully provide vital links with the local schools and clubs in preparation for our move to Adams Park.

This being our last season at Loakes Park, it will be a very emotional season and a season where we are also expected to match or better the success of last season. That may be a hard task but what ever happens you can be assured of entertainment, so keep up supporting the team home and away - win, lose or draw.

We are always grateful of any articles (past or present subjects), photos, cartoons, cuttings, etc. Thanks to all those who have sent in articles and cuttings in the past. By popular request we have reinstated Season by Season for all you history seekers. Full non-League coverage will return next month along with all the usual features.

INSIDE INFORMATION

■ New signings for Wycombe since last May include Paul Franklin (ex-Watford and Reading), Simon Stapleton (ex-Bristol Rovers) and Paul Sanderson (ex-Newport County). The headline catching signing was made on the eve of the new season when former Chelsea and QPR star Steve Wicks signed a two year contract for the Club. Wicks had been coaching at Portsmouth last season.

■ Departures since May have been Sean Norman to Wealdstone for £9,000, Keith Barrett and Lawrence Osborne to Redbridge Forest (formerly Leytonstone/Ilford) for £2,000 each and Andy Russell to Woking on a free. Nigel Taylor also returned to this country in the summer, and with Wycombe still holding his registration, was sold to Basingstoke for £2,000. 'Keeper, Steve Crompton has transferred to Chesham United.

John Kerr has not returned from the States but the Club are hopeful that the US International striker will return to Loakes Park after completing the summer playing in the American League. Kerr has reportedly turned down an offer to play for Colchester but has also been linked with a French League Club.

■ A major shock for Wycombe fans over the summer was the resignation of long serving Secretary of the Club, John Goldsworthy from the Board of Directors and from his position of Club Secretary. John, who has served the Club since election to the General Committee in July 1968, became Club Secretary on 5th November 1975.

John's resignation became official at the Club's AGM in August where he was presented with an engraved cut-glass bowl for his outstanding service to the Club. John was also made a Life Vice-President of the Club and summed up his decision at the AGM by saying *"The most important thing to me is that I've enjoyed it..and that's all that matters. You've got to enjoy what you do, otherwise pack it in. I've enjoyed myself and the time has come when I'm not and that's the time to say bye-bye"*

■ John Goldsworthy's place on The Board has been taken by Vice-President Alan Parry who was voted on by the shareholders at the AGM. Alan told the shareholders *"Hopefully most of you know who I am, otherwise ITV's viewing figures are even lower than I thought they were."* He went on to say *"A lot of people in the entertainment business get associated with football clubs for the wrong reasons. They are either on an ego trip or they enjoy the free seat and the free drink in the bar. I like to have you believe that is not the case with me"* With regard to the financial aspects he commented that the large gates at Loakes Park *"didn't come because the balance sheets were suitable, or not suitable, they came because the team was playing well"* Parry went on to say that he wanted to offer more involvement with the Club and said he could help with communication.

■ The offer of Season Tickets at last season's prices bought before 1st August, as expected, proved a major success despite the lack of publicity. Over 100 season tickets were sold prior to the deadline, representing a 500% increase in sales at the corresponding time last season.

■ The Capital League fixtures get underway for Wycombe on October 4 with a visit to Gillingham. The Capital League still consists of 13 clubs (Aylesbury being replaced by Aldershot).

It is the Club's intention to field a "stronger" Capital League side this season and to this effect have employed Derek Jones and Jim Melvin to oversee the team selection.

■ Adams Park is progressing at a steady rate with the seeding of the pitch and the construction of the main buildings due to start in early October.

A full up-date will appear in the next issue of Chairboys Gas.

■ F A Cup 1st Qualifying Round, Saturday 16th September Baldock Town versus Wycombe Wanderers.

SUMMERTIME BLUES

As with last season's first issue of CG it is perhaps worthwhile to look back on the previous season's activities at the Club and to analyse how far we have come on and off the pitch in the last twelve months.

Fourth place in the Conference, the quarter-finals of the F A Trophy and home attendances up to an average of 2,200 easily make season 1988/89 Wycombe's most successful in the Conference playing wise. It was therefore a surprise to many to read on the front page of the Bucks Free Press in August that the Wanderers had made a loss of nearly £60,000 over the season - the second consecutive loss and the highest in the history of the Club.

From purely football activities the Club had a turnover of £185,626 (up 50.75%) while the expenditure was also understandably up (by 30.87%) to £332,260. Of the £185,626 turnover over £110,000 was generated by gate receipts, season tickets and shares of away gates, representing a massive increase of 104% compared to the previous season. The remaining income for the Club came mainly from Transfer Fees (£23,000), Sponsorship (£36,379) and ground adverts (£14,202).

On the expenditure side the Match and Training Expenses were up 34% to £205,938 which included Payment to Players and National Insurance £139,269 (up 26%) and Fees and Expenses of Manager and Assistants £22,461 (up 85%). Maintenance of Loakes Park amounted to £23,692, a slight decrease from the previous season, while the remaining major expenditure came from Administration and Sundry Expenses which at £81,822 (including £65,000 Transfer Fees) was up from £61,730 (including £42,400 Transfer Fees) the previous season.

Counteracting the £132,888 loss on the football side, Miscellaneous donations amounted to £73,239 (including £36,000 from the Development Fund, £15,239 from the Blues Social Club, £11,000 from LeagueLine and £10,000 from Superloot) thus bringing the loss to the Football Club for the year to £59,649.

Understandably some see these figures, particularly the players wage bill as being 'outrageous' but the Club has the assets of players worth well into six figures and the Club are at least putting the money onto the pitch in order to achieve success. The danger is, of course, that a similar loss next season will put the Club into the red for probably the first time in it's history and ones shudders to think what the losses would have been if the large attendances at Loakes Park last season hadn't bailed the Club out of even greater deficit.

To counter-act the losses the Club will undoubtedly look to the commercial department for more and more income while the decision has also been made to raise entrance costs to Loakes Park for the third consecutive season - an unprecedented move in the history of the Club. This was an easy option for the Directors and one that they not surprisingly took. However it doesn't take an expert to see that this 'brave decision' may prove a disaster if results don't satisfy the part of any football crowd that drift away at the slightest hint of failure. It happened last season - 4,000 against Kettering one week followed by the 2,000 loyal fans two weeks later. £3 is still good value for an afternoon's entertainment but a lot of valuable support has been built-up over the past few seasons and it would be a tragedy to price them out in the future by moving the game up market.

The bone of contention last season was the Club's lack of ability to be able to communicate to the public and the Club reacted with the introduction of a ClubCall service (38p per minute peak, 25p per minute off-peak).

Callers on the first day of the service on 25th February 1989 would be greeted with; *"Hello and thanks for calling BluesLine, Wycombe Wanderers new information service. We've responded to your request for more news at what's going on at Loakes Park and from now on if you ring 0898..(etc) you'll get all the latest up to the minute news at any time of the day. My name's Alan Parry and I'll be presenting this 24 hours, 7 days a week service which will include interviews with Manager Jim Kelman and the Players, team news, up dates on the new ground and travel for away games, in fact everything you want on 0898..(etc) - so make a note of the number"*. Incidentally this 40 second intro' would have cost you 25p at peak rate.

Those of you familiar with these services will be adequately aware of their widespread use around the country and the reasons why these lines are introduced. It was a pleasant surprise therefore to hear the high quality of the service provided by Alan Parry. However, it appeared that as our Championship and Trophy hopes faded the initial enthusiasm also faded, culminating in a 20 second report of our final game of the season at Northwich put on to the system by the Club Secretary.

For many dedicated football supporters, the close season is a vital time - searching desperately for news of transfers, fixtures, season ticket prices, etc. A call to our ClubCall line however would have resulted in the caller hearing the Northwich result everyday until the middle of July (65 consecutive days to be exact). No news of the tour which took place in May, no information about season tickets despite the prices being set at the beginning of May and no news on the new ground even though the plans had been changed at the end of April. Even when the line was updated on 11th July by Commercial Manager Allan Robson this message remained unchanged for a month despite his promise that *"Any new comings or goings will be announced on ClubCall, which will be updated every Friday throughout July and in August we will be updating the system twice a week."* It would have been a simple task to update the line at least once a fortnight during the close season instead the service deteriorated to an embarrassing level and to a level that has cost the Club dearly in potential income. During the season ClubCall was raising about £300 per week yet the loss of credibility of the service over the summer and more importantly of the Club may prove to be incalculable. These were points put to the Club at a recent Club Evening, to which Allan Robson said *"For an awful long time there was very little information to actually put over - the problem was there may have been some snippet that could have gone on but by putting on these snippets it was almost wrong to get people to phone in to get one snippet of information, because the call is more than the normal charge. The thought of people picking up the telephone and incurring these sort of cost for virtually no information or confirmation of no information, I felt, was not worthwhile."* Robson went on to say that *"Now the season has started, the service will be updated at least twice a week."* and after noting the comments, the Club said they would try and *"put a bit more effort into communication"*.

And what has happened to the old information line set up back in the mid 70's and carrying vital match day information and the forthcoming fixture in a short and more importantly local rate price? This service spluttered during the arrival of ClubCall but has now seemingly vanished and the number is no longer in the Club programme. ClubCall may have considerably more lines but the old information line was sufficient 90% of the time and a glance at nearly all professional Clubs reveal that they have both types of services - one for gossip and news and the cheaper one for ticket, match day and travel information. We are, after all trying to attract more people through the turnstiles and as an example, when you phone the local Cinema for ticket information you don't get charged at 38p per minute.

It appears that the ClubCall service has been introduced purely for the financial benefit to the Club with any benefits from the communications point of view being purely coincidental. The Club still has a great deal to learn about public relations and it does seem strange that the Club Programme is still not effectively used as the official communication medium of the Club. With such a large captive audience of the people actually paying to watch the Club available via the programme, it provides an ideal outlet but one that most of the Directors choose not to use for the vast majority of the season and sometimes ignore and go via the local press.

In summary, it will always be the success of the team on the pitch that will be the overriding factor in determining the success of the Club. However, it is still vital the Club honour their commitment to improve communications and respect the services and views of the valuable voluntary staff that is slowly being eroded away from this Club. Supporters have responsibilities too - it is all too easy to criticise the team and Manager when results go wrong - but with responsibility should come, in the long term, an offer to supporters of the correct level of representation and involvement that should be the ground base of any truly community-based club.

Paul Lewis

A.G.M. 1989

The 4th Annual General Meeting of Wycombe Wanderers Football Club Limited took place on Monday 14th August 1989 in the Blues Club. Unlike in recent years, the meeting received local press coverage and the official Blues ClubCall service also had a brief report by Alan Parry. This report for Chairboys Gas by 'THE CHAIRHOLDERS'

The meeting was attended by around 80 of the Club's 170 plus shareholders. The meeting commenced shortly after 8.00pm where after a couple of alterations to the minutes of the previous year's meeting, Chairman Ivor Beeks presented the REPORT OF THE DIRECTORS.

The verbal report commented on the Club's success on the field last season following a poor start and where the *"resolve to provide attractive football and our Manager to stick to the task of providing better players has succeeded...and finishing in the top four gives us a great deal of optimism for the future and I believe in that context, in football, we have had a very successful year."* In looking to the future the Chairman pointed out that we now have a full-time Manager whose duties include involvement with the Community, particularly at Schools and where the response had already been *"overwhelming"*. It was also announced that John Granville had become the Club's first full-time player, with his task to help the Manager at the Schools and with the coaching of the Club's players.

A brief update on the move to Adams Park was given, outlining the reasons behind the slightly modified plans of the new ground, stating that *"you must cut your cloth according to what you've got"*. The Chairman paid tribute to the Club's full-time Director, Brian Lee, for his *"time and energy"* adding that *"there is no way we could move to Adams Park without this type of involvement."*

The Chairman also thanked his Board of Directors for their *"endless time and patience and care for detail"*. In summing up, the Chairman commented that *"When I was invited to join the Board of Directors just over two years ago, we felt that the move to Adams Park would take us about five years to take our Club into a stronger position. With two years gone, I'm sure we are moving in the right direction."* The Chairman closed the report with *"Ladies and Gentlemen, I submit to you that Wycombe Wanderers Football Club has had an excellent year."*

Item 3 on the agenda was the BALANCE SHEET which was explained, as in the previous two years by the Club's Financial Director, Graham Peart. Peart commented that *"These accounts cannot reflect a true picture that your Club finds itself in - the true picture is in fact very much better"* This was explained by the fact that players are not shown as assets and that the financial arrangements for the new ground are not yet shown in the accounts as this would be *"mis-leadingly good"* as the Club had already recieved *"substantial sums of money"* for Loakes Park to be shown in a separate account next year.

Peart emphasised the need for commercial fundraising to ensure the fielding of better teams. It was announced that the programme was going up 10p to 60p and the cost of advertising had also gone up 50%. Peart in justifying this move said *"we really do need to, firstly produce a better programme, which we will do, but also to increase our revenue."*

It was also announced that the Club Shop would not be run by the Blues Club but by the Commercial Department, the object according to Peart *"to carry more stock, give people a better choice and presumably we can produce a little more revenue"*

Looking at the budget for the coming season, Peart said *"We anticipate to show at least a break-even situation and that is allowing for the fact in my budget I have shown a significantly lower figure for gate receipts than we actually achieved"*

A lengthy debate followed on the balance sheet preceeded by a written request by a shareholder for information, including a request of how much the highest paid player earned during last season and a break down of transfer fees including signing on fees. The Financial Director stated *"As a point of policy I won't reveal to anyone the salary of our staff...unless there's a particular reason for doing so."* With

regards to the transfer fee break down Peart said "I think it might do damage to the Club in revealing this information, particularly as the next time you see it, it is printed either in Chairboys Gas or the Bucks Free Press. I'm not sure which would be worst actually."

There were a variety of questions from the floor regarding the Balance Sheet, including a statement from a shareholder that began with "It is encouraging Mr Peart said that he is budgeting for a break-even figure this year. I would point out that he said exactly the same words last year", and highlighted the fact that in the last two years the Club had lost £85,000. It was claimed that "The policy which the board are adopting is a high risk strategy..we should all know this. If your strategy does fail this Club could easily be another Newport County in another two or three years time." The speaker added "I wish you success, I hope you are right. If it isn't everyone in this room should know that the ultimate result if the strategy is not right will be the bankruptcy of this Club because it cannot carry on losing money at the rate you have lost in the last two years."

The same shareholder continued with "I criticised the previous administration for being too penny pinching and not spending the money. But in fact now the balance, to my mind, appears to have gone a little too far the other way." (Here,Here).

The speaker then asked for the assurance that the full amount paid for Nicky Evans had been reflected in these accounts. This was answered by the Financial Director and the Club's Auditor who pointed out that only half of the fee (approx £14,000) had been paid as the balance of the fee was dependent on the player agreeing to play for the Club in the coming season. The balance had been paid in June.

In answer to the general points, Peart said "You are quite right, the strategy has been to take some money out of the deposit account and put it on the field because we didn't have a very good team. I don't think the board would particularly wish to pursue this policy."

The major response to the first speaker came from another shareholder, who said "You have got a superb board, we are a very lucky Club..but we've now become very professional and looking for Fourth Division football and you need a Board of Directors under the guidance of a strong Chairman to take you there. We've got to cut out this bloody pettyness that is going on at the Club (Here, Here). We need to really get down and ask what do you want....You can see who the stirrers are. They are not the guys standing up and loading the bullets, they are just firing the bloody bullets at someone else. We are Wycombe Wanderers. I want Wycombe Wanderers in the Football League, I'm prepared to put bloody money in it. Are they? I doubt it. All they want is to bring the Club down on its knees." The speaker continued by praising Graham Peart and finished his 'speech' by saying "I can assure you of one thing, you have got a great opportunity to go forward, don't blame this board or anybody in this room if we don't go forward. If you take the alternative root tonight I can assure you that the Club would go back to where it deserves....in the Isthmian bloody League, and the sooner the better." The speaker then went on to claim "You've got people here who are trying to cruxify the Club. All I say is why don't they put the money in and take the bloody Club over and try and run it."

The Balance Sheet was eventually passed by a majority decision.

APPOINTMENT OF DIRECTORS was the fifth item on the agenda with Graham Peart seeking re-election and the shock announcement that Club Secretary, John Goldsworthy was resigning as Director and Secretary of the Company. Ivor Beeks paid tribute and said that "The Board of Directors were obviously very sorry to see John step down...if transfer fees were possible, surely this would be a Club record."

Including Graham Peart, four shareholders had been proposed for election to the Board and following speeches from the other three a paper ballot was carried out with Graham Peart gaining re-election and Alan Parry becoming the new Board member.

After the appointment of the Auditor, the Chairman closed the meeting by saying "It has been a very good evening when we've had the opportunity to exchange views, listen to what you've got to say and hopefully we shall be able to report to you next year and you will be in equally good mood, in terms of debate, and maybe we will have done something a little better on the field, even though we've had a successful season"



BOSTON UNITED, at 6-1, were installed as the pre-season favourites for the Conference title by bookmakers William Hill/Mecca. DARLINGTON and KETTERING TOWN are joint second favourites at 8-1 followed by WYCOMBE and YEOVIL TOWN at 10-1. The remaining odds are 11-1 ALTRINCHAM, 12-1 BARNET & KIDDERMINSTER, 14-1 FISHER ATHLETIC & MACCLESFIELD, 16-1 CHELTENHAM TOWN, 20-1 MERTHYR, NORTHWICH & TELFORD, 25-1 ENFIELD, RUNCORN & WELLING, 33-1 STAFFORD & SUTTON, 40-1 BARROW, 66-1 CHORLEY and 80-1 FARNBOROUGH TOWN.

BOSTON UNITED's excellent run-in to last season, which saw them steal third place from Wycombe, is the main reason why they have been named favourites. Additions to the United squad, include 'keeper Lee Pratt and midfielder Chris Growcock both from Grimsby Town, Shaun Hawkey from U S football and Willie Gamble from Lincoln City. However, last season's joint top scorer Paul Wilson has joined YEOVIL TOWN for a £13,000 fee while Warren Ward and Derek Duggan have been released.

After failed legal action against Maidstone United, DARLINGTON have got down to the task of gaining an immediate return to Football League status. 'The Quakers' who visited Loakes Park for their first (and last?) time on September 2, have restructured their Board of Directors, with Richard Corden and Alan Noble taking over as Chairman and Vice-Chairman respectively. Manager Brian Little has been retained on a two year contract and after a summer clear out of 17 players at Feethams, Little has spent £58,000 on returning the squad to 20 full-time players, supported by 12 YTS youngsters. The biggest outlay for Darlington was a Club record fee of £40,000 for Hartlepool United striker Andy Toman while the only income came from Gary Worthington's £12,000 move to Wrexham. Former England International, Little, has also registered himself to play as has coach Frankie Gray, the former Leeds and Scotland International.

After the unfortunate publicity attached to FISHER ATHLETIC's last Manager, the appointment of Fisher's new Manager, Malcolm Allison, has provided a whole new channel of thought for the tabloids. Throw in the fact that they've employed a former World Kick Boxing champion as training supervisor and the possibilities are endless. The new owners of Fisher, Winners Worldwide have pledged to put money into the Club and have begun by spending a much needed £10,000 on upgrading the floodlights at the Surrey Docks Stadium to the required Conference standard.

The teams promoted to the Conference have concentrated their efforts over the summer to improving their grounds and may soon find that team strengthening will be necessary to adjust to the higher standard of football in the Conference. MERTHYR TYDFIL are the major ground investors with £125,000 spent on Penydarren Park. Work has included pitch drainage, work to the main stand, improving the press facilities and dressing rooms and a physiotherapy area. On the playing front their most notable addition has been Keri Andrews who played for Newport County last season.

BARROW have made no additions to their 1988-89 Championship winning squad but have spent £40,000 on essential safety work on their Holker Street ground. To ensure that a safety certificate was issued by the local authority, additional fire exits, alarms and new covering to the main stand was necessary. Barrow have also recently announced a £1.5 million plan to redevelop Holker Street in conjunction with the town's rugby league side. The rugby ground would be sold and the money invested in shared facilities at a revamped Holker Street Stadium.

The other newcomers, FARNBOROUGH TOWN have spent a reported £100,000 on their Cherrywood Road ground. The improvements have included new floodlights, additional turnstiles, terracing, toilets and covered standing accommodation. Manager Ted Pearce enters his 20th year in charge of Farnborough having made a number of close season signings including 'keeper Julian Gray (Croydon £4,000), defenders Andy Bye (Basingstoke £4,000), Doug Hughes (Walton & Hersham) and midfielders Andy Rogers (Carshalton) and Tony Flanagan (Norwich City).

CONFERENCE PRICE GUIDE SEASON 1989-90

As Wycombe fans suffer the third price rise in as many seasons, it is interesting to compare prices around the clubs in the Conference. The Annual General Meeting of the Conference had a proposal to raise the minimum charge to £3.00 turned down after strong opposition by the northern based clubs and the minimum charge for adults including VAT was set at approx. £2.50. It is left to the Club's discretion on what they charge for OAP's and Children.

Apart from Wycombe, the other clubs charging £3.00 entrance fee this season are BARNET, DARLINGTON, KIDDERMINSTER and YEOVIL. Best value appears to be at KETTERING TOWN where the entrance fee is the minimum £2.50, while a terrace adult season ticket will set you back just £35.00 for 21 games at Rockingham Road.

A club that certainly push their season tickets are YEOVIL TOWN, who offer three levels of discount over the summer to encourage early purchase. Before the season started they had set a new Club record of over 600 season tickets sold - attracting supporters from six different counties.

A comparison to Football League prices has CRYSTAL PALACE at the top of the pile with a massive £7 to stand on their First Division terrace while LIVERPOOL and MANCHESTER UNITED charge just £4. Most Football League clubs are in fact charging between £3.50 and £4.00. WOLVES are reportedly charging just £3.00 for a Second Division terrace space at Molineux while more locally READING are charging £3.50 for a terrace space, WATFORD £4, QPR £5, OXFORD UNITED £5, BRENTFORD £4.50 and CHELSEA up to £6 to stand.

CLUB	-----GROUND ADMISSION (£)-----				-----SEASON TICKETS (£)-----			
	-----TERRACE-----		-STAND TRANSFER-		-----TERRACE-----		-----STAND-----	
	ADULT	CHILD/OAP	ADULT	CHILD/OAP	ADULT	CHILD/OAP	ADULT	CHILD/OAP
Altrincham	2.50	1.00	1.50	1.00	N/A	N/A	55.00	25.00
Barnet	3.00	1.50	1.50	.75	51.00	25.50	76.50	38.25
Barrow	2.50	1.25	0.50	0.25	?	?	?	?
Boston United	2.50	1.50	.50	.50	47.00	26.00	58.00	37.00
Cheltenham	2.50	1.50	1.00 ¹	1.00 ¹	40.00	25.00	60.00 ¹	40.00 ¹
Chorley	2.70	1.50	.70	.50	50.50	26.00	62.00	35.00
Darlington	3.00	1.50	2.00	2.00	56.00	30.00	82.00	50.00
Enfield	2.50	1.50	.50	1.50	N/A	N/A	50.00	25.00
Farnborough	2.80	1.50	.50	.50	53.00	28.00	64.00	38.00
Fisher Ath	2.50	.50	1.00	1.00	?	?	?	?
Kettering	2.50	1.50	1.00	1.00	35.00	35.00	60.00	45.00
Kidderminster	3.00	2.00 ²	1.00	1.00	50.00	33.50 ²	67.00	50.00
Macclesfield	2.50	1.50	1.25	1.00	?	?	?	?
Merthyr	2.50	1.80	1.00 ³	.50 ³	46.00	32.00	62.00	46.00
Northwich	2.50	1.50	1.25	1.00	40.00	20.00	50.00	30.00
Runcorn	2.50	1.00	1.00	.50	45.00	15.00	62.00	27.50
Stafford	2.50	1.50	1.00	1.00	48.00	29.00	67.00	48.00
Sutton United	2.50	1.50	FREE	FREE	?	?	?	?
Telford	2.60	1.50	.60	.60	?	?	?	?
Welling	2.50	1.50	1.00	1.00	42.00	25.00	59.00	39.00
Wycombe	3.00	1.50	.50	.50	51.00 ⁴	25.50 ⁴	59.50 ⁴	34.00 ⁴
Yeovil	3.00	1.50	.50	.50	47.25 ⁴	22.30 ⁴	55.00 ⁴	31.50 ⁴

NOTES:

1. Cheltenham offer reduced prices for the wings of their main stand and also allow children free admission to ground if accompanied by an adult.
2. Kidderminster Harriers allow accompanied children free admission to ground.
3. Both Merthyr and Wycombe offer reduced prices for the 'family' section of their main stand.
4. Both Wycombe and Yeovil offered discounted season tickets for early purchase.

Price guide painstakingly researched by IAN BLACKLIDGE

SEASON BY SEASON 1979-80

SUMMARY by Steve Maguire.

The Wanderers started the 1979/80 season with a number of changes in personnel. The previous season's leading scorer, Stuart Atkins, had been sold to Dunstable (he later joined Kettering and played alongside Nicky Evans), while virtually all of the regular back four seemed to be leaving. Bobby Davies had decided to take a break from the game as he was not enjoying his football while both Alan Phillips and Keith Mead had been advised to find other clubs by Manager Andy Williams. Phillips teamed up with Leatherhead, but Keith Mead continued to train with the Club and after a few matches was back in the team and a few months later took over as Club Captain.

Most of the newcomers to the squad proved rather less durable than Mr Mead with Ian Barr, Sean Price, Jim MacCarthy and ex Reading striker John Murray all failing to see the season out. More successful were Jimmy Jacobs and Tony Price with Price scoring hat tricks against both Hitchin and Harrow (although this was not enough to guarantee a regular place in the side, indeed he started the Harrow game on the substitute's bench).

After a promising start to the season things began to go wrong around November, a number of Wycombe fans left in disgust when we were 4-0 down at half time at Harlow in the Hitachi Cup. A fine performance at Underhill (in their pre-Flashman days, although Barry Fry was manager) set up a home tie with Croydon in the First Round of the FA Cup but we were worse than dreadful on the day, Croydon well deserving their 3-0 win. The crowd for the Croydon game was 1832, the highest of the season (the 32 was rumoured to be the Croydon contingent), just three days later only 380 fans saw us scrape a 2-2 draw with bottom of the table Tilbury.

The FA Cup disaster prompted calls in the Free Press for Andy Williams' resignation, but there a couple of bright spots in these dark days. We finished runners-up to Bromley in the Isthmian League's inaugural Five a Side at Wembley, while in the league game at

Croydon, Gary Lester made his debut for the Wanderers. The true meaning of Boxing Day was badly mis-interpreted by Gary Fowles in the local derby with Bobby Moore's Oxford City, but the real shock came after the game at Slough when it was announced that Andy Williams had resigned. After surviving the call for his head from the terraces he decided to quit due to the Club's decision to axe scout Nick Beach for financial reasons.

Brian Lee took temporary charge of team affairs until the friendly with Coventry (which officially opened the new floodlights), when former Watford and Northampton manager Mike Keen was appointed. Mike, however, was unable to prevent us sliding out of the FA Trophy at Burton in his first game, but he did introduce a number of new faces to the club. George Borg cost a record fee from Dulwich (quoted at the time as £2000, although it was later revealed to be £5000 - the club being keen to play down the size of the fee in case things did not work out) and his home debut in the return with Oxford City, saw the most entertaining game of the season at Loakes Park. In front of one of only three gates on over 1000 seen at the ground all season we went 3-0 up, were pulled back to 3-3, before finally winning 5-3. George made his mark with the home crowd by scoring with a beautiful lob over Gary Lester from 30 yards for the own goal of the season.

By finishing the season with a run of seven league games won in a row there was a good deal of optimism at the club. During the season the average home gate was 740, while leading scorers were Terry Scott (26), Howard Kennedy (23) and Paul Miles (17).

Off the pitch 1979-80 was the season in which the Club began to look at setting up as a Limited Company. In a statement in November 1979 the Company laid down four principal aims of the company.

1. To provide and promote as good as possible standard of football to the benefit of the town.
2. To be financially viable.

3. To aim for success at the present level of football and in the current league, but to be aware of the need for progression or change and to prepare for such eventualities.

4. To maintain a development policy within the Company of both the playing and social areas.

Brian Lee was made Chairman of the new Company and said at the time that the main reason for the Club becoming a company were financial. It would enable them to own the Loakes Park ground, which would act as collateral should the Club wish to raise large sums of money.

COMPETITION	PL	W	D	L	FOR	AGA
Barger Isthmian League	42	17	13	12	72	53
F A Cup	2	1	0	1	3	4
F A Trophy	3	1	1	1	3	4
Berks & Bucks Senior Cup	1	0	0	1	1	3
Hitachi League Cup	1	0	0	1	3	4
Battle of Britain Cup	1	0	1	0	0	0
Bowyers Challenge Trophy	2	1	1	0	6	3
Friendly/Tours	24	13	4	7	58	27
TOTAL	76	33	20	23	145	97

GAME	DATE	OPPOSITION	COMP.	V	RESULT
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1	11/08/79	Nuneaton Borough	Fr	H	L 2-4
2	14/08/79	Barnet	Fr	H	D 1-1
3	18/08/79	Boreham Wood	BIL	H	L 1-2
4	21/08/79	Watford	Fr	H	W 3-2
5	25/08/79	Dagenham	BIL	A	D 1-1
6	27/08/79	Tilbury	BIL	A	M 2-0
7	01/09/79	Dulwich Hamlet	BIL	A	L 1-2
8	04/09/79	Walthamstow Avenue	BIL	H	D 1-1
9	08/09/79	Flackwell Heath	Fr	H	L 0-2
10	09/09/79	Hendon	BIL	A	D 2-2
11	11/09/79	Hitchin Town	BIL	A	W 3-2
12	13/09/79	Winslow United	Fr	H	M 2-0
13	15/09/79	Tooting & Mitcham United	BIL	H	D 0-0
14	18/09/79	Enfield	BIL	H	L 0-4
15	22/09/79	Slough Town	BIL	H	M 1-0
16	27/09/79	R.A.F. Support Command	Fr	H	W 4-1
17	29/09/79	Leatherhead	BIL	A	D 2-2
18	02/10/79	Staines Town	BIL	H	W 4-0
19	04/10/79	Amersham Town	BCT	A	D 3-3
20	06/10/79	Harrow Borough	BIL	H	W 5-0
21	09/10/79	Woking	BIL	A	D 0-0
22	13/10/79	Barking	BIL	A	L 1-2
23	16/10/79	Sutton United	BIL	H	D 2-2
24	20/10/79	Dulwich Hamlet	BIL	H	M 2-1
25	23/10/79	Hayes	BIL	A	L 0-1
26	27/10/79	Harlow Town	BIL	H	L 2-3
27	30/10/79	Harlow Town	HLC 3	A	L 3-4
28	03/11/79	Barnet	FAC 4q	A	M 2-0
29	06/11/79	Boreham Wood	BIL	A	D 0-0
30	10/11/79	Dagenham	BIL	H	D 0-0
31	13/11/79	Slough Town	BIL 2	A	L 1-3
32	14/11/79	Oxford University	Fr	H	L 0-2
33	17/11/79	Walthamstow Avenue	BIL	A	L 1-2
34	24/11/79	Croydon	FAC 1	H	L 0-3
35	27/11/79	Tilbury	BIL	H	D 2-2

36	01/12/79	Croydon	BIL	A	M 1-0
37	05/12/79	Carnegie College	Fr	H	D 2-2
38	08/12/79	Hendon	BIL	H	D 1-1
39	13/12/79	Kidlington	Fr	H	M 0-0
40	15/12/79	Enfield	BIL	A	L 0-2
41	18/12/79	Hitchin Town	BIL	H	M 1-0
42	26/12/79	Oxford City	BIL	A	W 5-0
43	29/12/79	Barking	BIL	H	L 1-2
44	05/01/80	Slough Town	BIL	A	L 1-2
45	08/01/80	Harlow	Fr	A	W 3-1
46	19/01/80	Harlow Town	BIL	A	L 1-2
47	21/01/80	Bedford Town	FAT 1	H	D 0-0
48	24/01/80	Bedford Town	FAT 1 r	A	M 1-0
49	26/01/80	Coventry City	Fr	H	L 2-4
50	02/02/80	Burton Albion	FAT 2	A	L 2-4
51	07/02/80	Denmark Under-21s	Fr	H	M 2-1
52	09/02/80	Wealdstone	Fr	H	D 1-1
53	12/02/80	R.A.F.	BOBC	H	D 0-0
54	16/02/80	Woking	BIL	H	D 1-1
55	19/02/80	Burnham	Fr	H	L 1-2
56	23/02/80	Sutton United	BIL	A	D 1-1
57	01/03/80	Hayes	BIL	H	M 3-1
58	04/03/80	Staines Town	BIL	A	L 1-4
59	07/03/80	Borough Road College	Fr	H	M 3-0
60	11/03/80	Hillingdon Borough	Fr	H	D 0-0
61	15/03/80	Carshalton Athletic	BIL	A	M 1-0
62	22/03/80	Croydon	BIL	H	M 5-1
63	25/03/80	High Wycombe Under-21s	Fr	H	M 7-1
64	29/03/80	Harrow Borough	BIL	A	M 2-1
65	05/04/80	Oxford City	BIL	H	M 5-3
66	07/04/80	Vard F.C. (Norway)	Fr	H	M 3-0
67	12/04/80	Harrow Borough	Fr	H	L 1-2
68	15/04/80	Amersham Town	BCT	H	M 3-0
69	19/04/80	Leatherhead	BIL	H	M 3-1
70	22/04/80	Wokingham Town	Fr	H	M 1-0
71	26/04/80	Carshalton Athletic	BIL	H	M 4-1
72	29/04/80	Kingstonian	Fr	H	M 2-0
73	03/05/80	Tooting & Mitcham United	BIL	A	M 2-1
74	16/05/80	Marine	Fr	H	W 4-0
75	29/05/80	Pietrasanta (Italy)	Tour	A	L 0-1
76	31/05/80	Ciacco (Italy)	Tour	A	M 7-0

1979-80

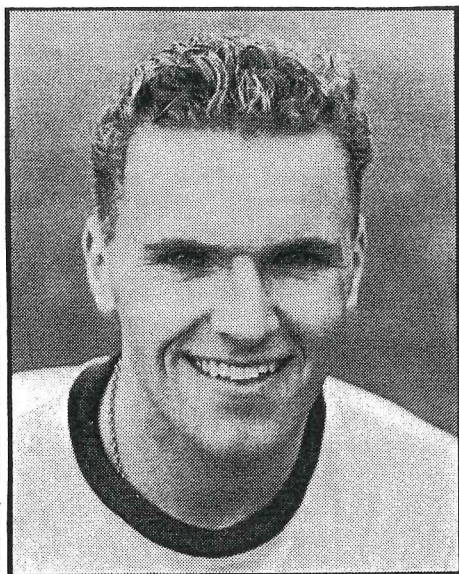
Premier Division	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Enfield	42	25	9	8	74	32	84
Walthamstow Avenue	42	24	9	9	87	48	81
Dulwich Hamlet	42	21	16	5	66	37	79
Sutton United	42	20	13	9	67	40	73
Dagenham	42	20	13	9	82	56	73
Tooting & Mitcham United	42	21	6	15	62	59	69
Barking	42	19	10	13	72	51	67
Harrow Borough	42	17	15	10	64	51	66
Woking	42	17	13	12	78	59	64
Wycombe Wanderers	42	17	13	12	72	53	64
Harlow Town	42	14	12	16	54	60	54
Hitchin Town	42	13	15	14	54	68	54
Hendon	42	12	13	17	50	57	49
Slough Town	42	13	10	19	54	71	49
Boreham Wood	42	13	10	19	50	69	49
Staines Town	42	14	6	22	46	67	48
Hayes	42	12	9	21	48	68	45
Leatherhead	42	11	11	20	51	60	44
Carshalton Athletic	42	12	7	23	48	78	43
Croydon	42	10	10	22	51	59	40
Oxford City	42	10	9	23	49	87	39
*Tilbury	42	7	11	24	41	90	30

*2 points deducted

Life Without Sean

By: Philip Ball

PHOTO: BULLS PRESS



A dramatic title you may think, but it's not meant so much in the sense of "What will next season be like without Sean Norman?", although that in itself will be interesting, but rather "What was it like last season without Sean Norman?".

A rather strange question you may say - surely Sean Norman did play all season? Indeed you would be correct, he in fact appeared in 40 of our QMVC matches, 3 of those as substitute. To me, however, the few times that he did not play in that familiar left-back position were very significant, and if we are to believe the press reports, then they were clearly very significant to Sean himself.

The recent departure of Sean Norman to Wealdstone for £10,000 gave me personal sadness, though of course it came as no surprise to anyone in touch with the club. Sean had frequently been sacrificed for Jim Kelman's tactical experiments, and, not surprisingly, had got rather upset at being left out of the team in preference to another player being put in the left-back position. Adding insult to injury, the player's chosen to replace Sean were, without exception, right-footed players who struggled in the unfamiliar position. Any right footed player who has been asked to play either at left-back or left-wing will know exactly what I mean!

At this point I would like to make it clear that I am a big fan of Jim Kelman, and believe that has brought performances out of players that many of us never thought possible - John Kerr being the classic example. However, no manager can hope to please all of the fans all of the time, and we all have different opinions of every player - that is what makes football the intriguing game that we all love. I also believe that Sean Norman did not perform as well last season as he had done the previous season, and that he went through some poor patches during last season.

Sean Norman's arrival in November 1987 was greeted with celebrations, and astonishment at the bargain price of just £2,500 placed on him by Colchester. Following a very impressive loan period, manager Peter Suddaby must have been very relieved to have signed such a quality player at such a small price, at a time when the fortunes of the team were at rock bottom, have just lost to Bognor Regis in the QMVC Cup. Indeed Sean Norman was one of the few significant signings made by Peter Suddaby during his brief reign, Mark Boyland probably being the other most notable. In fact without Norman and Boyland I doubt whether we would have retained our QMVC place that season.

The QMVC campaign started off somewhat disastrously from a defensive point of view, with only Sean Norman and Keith Barrett looking up to the mark. The rest of the back four was made up of Kevin Day and Nigel Taylor, who was due to leave very soon. With Andy Kerr sidelined through injury, Jim Kelman made probably the wisest and most timely signing of the season snatching Glyn Creaser from Barnet for just £15,000. This was also probably the biggest bargain of the season, besides the ludicrously low figure of £3,000 for Andy Kerr. Unfortunately Creaser's misdemeanours with Barnet meant that he would be suspended almost straight after he joined us, so Jim Kelman had to find another plan. The shrewd move of playing Steve Abley at right-back in place of Taylor soon paid dividends, and the defence settled down to a steady formation and the results started to flow, with a six match unbeaten run.

The trip to Vauxhall-Opel Leaguers Wokingham Town for an uninspiring Clubcall Cup match on a thoroughly miserable evening coincided with the return from suspension of Glyn Creaser, and most people suspected that the axe would fall on Kevin Day - in fact it fell on Sean Norman, with Kevin Day moving to left-back. Unfortunately for us, Wokingham's hottest property happened to be their speedy right-winger, who not only kept Kevin Day

more than busy, but also forced Kevin Durham back to help out. In fact it was an unlucky own goal by Kevin Day that actually gave Wokingham the lead shortly before half-time. More bad luck struck early in the second half when Dave Carroll had to go off with a broken collar-bone, and he was replaced by Sean Norman, who slotted in at left-back, freeing Kevin Durham to push up. Wycombe went on to win 2-1, and Sean Norman was restored to first-team duties for the next match.

The defence was kept the same for the next 4 matches, of which we won 3 and drew the other, but then came the visit to Loakes Park of title favourites Kettering Town in the F.A. Cup. Understandably cautious of the reputations of Kettering's sharp forwards, Jim Kelman decided that the best way of handling the speedy Robbie Cooke was to bring in Kevin Day to mark him in place of Sean Norman. Cooke scored both goals in their 2-1 win.

Sean celebrated his return to the team for the next match by scoring the only goal in a memorable win at Boston United. Despite winning the next game, Sean was again dropped, this time for the visit of Sutton United. Defensively the match was a nightmare, with Sutton being gifted the lead through a terrible defensive mix-up, and then given a second through an unlucky own-goal which deflected off Andy Kerr. A fine recovery in the last 25 minutes salvaged a very welcome point with a 2-2 draw. Sean was again left out for the visit to Kidderminster, where we went down 2-0 in controversial circumstances.

He returned to the team for the draw up at Altrincham, but was again dropped for the trip to Barnet, where we slumped to a 1-0 defeat in a poor game. Jim Kelman experimented briefly with Dave Carroll at left-back, but with Carroll being a right-footed and naturally creative midfielder, this was not too successful.

Sean was restored to left-back, and the full-back pairing with Steve Abley was kept for the next four months, which saw us win 16 and draw 5 of the 23 matches, with the only 2 defeats being those against Kettering and Hyde. The only time that this pairing was broken was due to an back injury that Sean suffered which meant that he had to leave the field at Stafford after just half an hour, and forced him to miss the next match, the F.A. Trophy game at Wealdstone. Sean's departure at Stafford left the unfortunate Dave Carroll to fill in at left back, and he was given a bit of a roasting by the Stafford winger.

After this tremendously successful run of results, it was rather surprising when Jim dropped Sean for the visit to Sutton in mid-April, though any sympathy for Sean was quickly forgotten when people saw his questionable new hair-do ! In a game best forgotten we slumped to a dismal 3-0 defeat. Sean's place in that match was taken by Andy Kerr, just back from injury, who, like Dave Carroll, struggled in the tricky left-back position. It was sad to see a player of the great ability of Andy Kerr struggling to cope in such an unfamiliar position.

With Sean restored to left-back we travelled up to Macclesfield and recorded one of the most memorable results of the season with a fantastic 1-0 win. Remarkably, for the next match, our final match of the season at Loakes Park, out went Sean Norman, and in again came Dave Carroll at left-back. A dismal match resulted in a 0-0 draw.

The formation in the final match at Northwich was something of a mystery. With John Kerr being allowed to return to the USA early Jim Kelman was left with a selection problem. His solution was to play Dave Carroll at left back, Andy Kerr up front, and Sean Norman as sweeper. We went in at half-time 2-1 down, and an injury to Dave Carroll resulted in Matt Crossley replacing him for the second half. He took Sean Norman's place in the centre, which meant Sean reverted to his familiar left-back position for the rest of the game. We went on to record a fine 3-2 victory.

You can easily judge from this article my own point of view, and undoubtedly every Wycombe fan will have a different opinion, as indeed will Sean Norman himself. However I am sure that all Wycombe fans will be unanimous in wishing Sean a happy and successful future wherever he plays, and we thank him for all that he has done for our club.



PHOTO: Bucks Free Press

Do They Mean Us? Do They Mean Us? Mean Us? Do They Mean Us? Do They Do They Mean Us? Do They Mean Us?

SURELY?

Our desperation for all things said on Wycombe Wanderers over the summer has forced us to purchase yet another copy of FOOTBALL TODAY. Their non-League coverage is surprisingly good and in the July issue commented "*Maidstone United and Kettering Town attracted most attention with their neck-and-neck fight for the Championship and subsequent promotion to the Football League, but credit must also go to the likes of Barnet, Macclesfield and in particular Wycombe Wanderers and Kidderminster Harriers for their efforts at the top. The latter two sides were arguably the best footballing sides in the league and will surely feature prominently in the forthcoming season.*"

SOMETHING SPECIAL

Another person who rates Wycombe is Fisher's new boss, the irrepressible Malcolm Allison. BUCKS EXAMINER reporter Martyn Pritchard met 'Big Mal' at the London Hilton and discovered that he "*regards Wycombe as the team to beat.*" and added "*I understand that Wycombe are quite a good side and that wide man Kevin Durham is something special. My message to them is that I intend to get Fisher into the league at the first attempt.*" The article closed with "*Whether Wycombe and Fisher enjoy good fortune this season remains to be decided, but with Malcolm Allison and his famed fedora due for an outing at Loakes Park this term, senior non-League football is set for rather more colourful days ahead.*" Wycombe are due to play Fisher at Loakes Park on 26th September - assuming Allison is still Manager, look out for some original headlines in the match reports.

INDICTMENT

A reputation on the field is not all that Wycombe are gaining. The departure of Sean Norman to Wealdstone for £9,000 had 'The Stones' Manager Tony Jennings bemoaning the fee of a player he considered last season for the England Semi-Pro side. THE HARROW OBSERVER of 20th July included the following;

Jennings slams inflated fees after Norman signs

Having splashed out £10,000 on Tony Kelly and £7,000 on Steve Tapley, it brought Stones' spending on new players to £26,000 in just two weeks and while Jennings is obviously pleased at having captured three quality players, he is nevertheless clearly unhappy over the way fees have rocketed.

"It is a sad indictment of what happens when one club goes over the top on players," he said. "Wycombe's signing of Glyn Creaser and Nicky Evans from barnet last season triggered it off."

Creaser cost Wycombe £15,000 and Evans a massive £32,000.

Jennings added: "Much effort has been made to bring better players to the club but I just don't agree about the size of the fees. I hold strong views on the managers of clubs involved and it's a face of football I don't really like."

PLAGIARISED

The press couldn't quite build the Wycombe/Aylesbury pre-season friendly up to the same level as last season's Conference clashes but Claire Perry of BUCKINGHAMSHIRE OBSERVER managed to get fairly worked up in her match report where *"Wanderers romped home to win on Saturday, beating local rivals Aylesbury 1-0 with another hot shot by Mark West from the penalty spot."* and then went on to say *"The most exciting part of the first half was deciphering the abuse being hurled from the Blues supporters towards the hapless Tim Garner, as they tuned up and practised their new songs plagiarised from many First Division favourites"* It reads as if it is something to be proud but surely there are chants more original than the mind numbingly boring "You're shit..argh".

SEETHING

Over at the County town, THE BUCKS HERALD claimed in their report of the game, *"DODGY PENALTY THWARTS UNITED"* where *"United were left seething after the referee, Mr M Gardiner of the High Wycombe Referees' Society, allowed Wanderers to take a quick free kick from the wrong place moments before defender Simon Mason had to tip away Kevin Durham's goalbound shot with his hand"* Note the emphasis on the referee, almost implying that by coming from Wycombe he is going to be bias. Whatever next? A Wycombe replica shirt under his black shirt and taunts of 1-0 as the ball hit the back of the Aylesbury net?

THIRD RATE

Pete Thomas was obviously not impressed with Wycombe's list of pre season friendlies following the 3-0 defeat at Northwich on the opening day of the season. In his MIDWEEK report he suggested *"the root of the problem would seem to lie in a pre-season build-up which pitted Blues against a succession of second and third rate sides."*

"Only a last ditch clash with a Queens Park Rangers XI lent any resemblance of respectability to the fixture list, and then it was Rangers, rather than Wycombe who prompted the meeting"

TROUBLE

While the Blues CLUBCALL was still enthusing over the signing of Steve Wicks and Paul Saunderson 48 hours after the event, NORTHWICH VICTORIA's own 38p a minute service had taken the trouble to report on their 3-0 victory over us. However, they did manage to get all the goal times wrong and credit Nicky Evans with a shot that hit the post. Not bad considering Nicky Evans was sitting in the stand!

LEAFY REPUTATION

Still on the subject of Northwich Victoria, and why not, Mike Talbot-Butler of the NORTHWICH GUARDIAN wrote in The Vics programme versus Wycombe *"what lovely gates they attract down there in the leafy Home Counties. There again, though I expect they need them to keep up the wage scales reputedly operated by the southern clubs."* OK, own up, who told him?

DEJA VU

Finally this month a cutting from the BUCKS HERALD of 24th August that doesn't mention Wycombe, but I'd thought we'd include just to remind ourselves why we are in the Conference.

United's relegation from the GM Conference hit home to the players when they arrived at Barking's Mayesbrook Park ground at just before 2pm on Saturday. After the good pitches and impressive grounds of the Conference, Mayesbrook Park came as something of a culture shock.

The ground itself was in a state of disrepair but, more importantly, the pitch was in a dreadful state. There were signs of re-seeding during the close season but little or no attention seemed to have been given to it since. Pinned to one floodlight pylon was a board saying 'Please keep off the pitch' — unfortunately it seems the groundsman had also taken that advice.

As the United team surveyed the scene one of the players summed up the feeling of everyone. "If we ever needed any motivation to get out of this league, then this is it," he said.

That should have heightened Aylesbury's determination to pick up three points but from the start it was clear that United were not going to have things all their own way against a competent Barking side.

Behind the Goal *with Simon Burrage*

Thank God the close season's over. I could hardly stand the tension, picking up the local papers each, reading all those stories about possible new signings, departures, pre-season friendlies etc. OK, just in case sarcasm really is the lowest form of wit, I'll leave that particular line of approach, as there wasn't anything for them to print most weeks anyway. The point I would like to make though is that there seems to be an attitude prevalent in the local newspapers that once we play our final game of the season we all forget about football and follow cricket for three months. In reality I think most of us are even more anxious for any small snippet of football news during June/July than we are during the season. No doubt the press would claim they are not always kept fully informed of news by the Club (do we still have a Press Officer?) and that is probably fair comment. However, in the BFP of 4th August, the day before our first pre-season friendly at home to Staines Town (not Stones Town as mentioned by Allan Robson on ClubCall), there was no preview of the fixture at all. A number of casual, floating supporters do rely on the BFP for WW news and had the game been properly publicised on the back page an extra 50 to 100 people may just have come through the turnstiles. That represents a potential £200 income to the Club - not a great deal of money (enough for Nicky Evans next visit to the hair-stylist maybe?) but still vital income. I don't want to be too critical of the people from Gomm Road (particularly as they have been helpful in publicising Chairboys Gas on a few occasions) but there is certainly room for improvement here.

Perhaps the two most disturbing items of summer news were the inexplicable sale of Sean Norman to Wealdstone and the resignation of Club Secretary John Goldsworthy. JG had been Secretary for many years, and since retiring from his job with Westminster City Council had worked more or less full-time for the Club, entirely on a voluntary basis, purely for the love of the game and WWFC. It is clearly a serious matter then, when someone like JG resigns, apparently due to disagreement with the policies of the Clubs' Board of Directors. It must be said that he has, of course, maintained a dignified, rather low-key stance over the matter and has not sought to 'dish the dirt'. Nevertheless, he has no intention of sweeping anything under the carpet either, as was shown by his comments to the BFP that this was very much a resignation, not a retirement, on his part. Quite rightly, he was presented with a suitable memento in commemoration of his service to the Club at the recent Club Annual General Meeting, and he made it clear he will be staying around long enough to ease the new Secretary, Alan Hutchinson, into the job.

One of the last things John Goldsworthy did in his capacity as Club Secretary was to arrange the lovely trip to Suffolk for the pre-season friendly with Sudbury Town. In fact, this was something of a last resort choice of fixture (no disrespect etc etc) as a result of the Conference's curious and annoying decision to start their League season one week after the Football League and just about every other major senior league in the country, and thus leaving options for friendly matches very limited. However, for those of us who love travelling to see the team play in new places (ie closet groundhoppers) this was a very welcome fixture. Sudbury, just about reachable by rail via a single track, rickety shuttle through the sun-drenched Suffolk countryside, was a pleasant little town, with plenty of good pubs and on a summers day the Sudbury ground was most picturesque. No reflection on the game, (won 4-2) of course, but lying on the grass behind the goal after a few lunchtime drinks I ▶

did find it rather difficult to keep my eyes open. Oh, alright I'll admit it, I slept through virtually the whole game. However, there was still a pleasant walk back to the railway station via a public footpath which ran along the ground and used to part of the railway itself - a real nature ramble. All in all, a most pleasurable trip.

Pleasurable is probably not the word I would use to describe the previous Monday evening, however, when the AGM of WWFC Ltd. took place in the Blues Club attended as usual by those fortunate enough to be shareholders. I am fortunate to be a shareholder because I happened to buy a season ticket a few seasons back when one share was automatically issued to each season ticket holder. Many other people who have worked voluntarily for the Club for several years are not so fortunate - why? Because the rules of the Club state that to become a shareholder now you have to have been a season-ticket holder for 3 consecutive seasons. If you work voluntarily at Loakes Park on matchdays it is not really necessary to purchase a season ticket, consequently no season-ticket, no share. You can flog your guts out in your spare-time for the Club 9 months a year but no, the Club does not want you at its AGM.

Anyway, as I say, I am privileged enough to be able to attend, so I go along and witness an hour or two of first class bitching. Quite reasonably, someone dares to question the accuracy of the minutes of the previous AGM and this is reluctantly dealt with while others on the floor mutter and moan under their breath. It seemed that some members regarded this as some time wasting exercise. Indeed, it soon became clear that in the eyes of many of those present that anyone who had the audacity to question or challenge the Board of Directors on their actions and policies was nothing more than a subversive trouble-maker. This became particularly apparent during the protracted debate on the Clubs' accounts for the year, which showed a loss of more than £59,000. This is obviously a large sum money, and a number of members quite understandably expressed their concern. Eventually one 'gentlemen', if that's the right word, rose at the back of the room and, in a speech which sometimes bordered on the hysterical (and I don't mean funny), accused these members of being nothing but 'stirrers' and then said, and I kid you not, that they had no right to question the Board's Financial policies unless they, like he, were 'prepared to put their money into the Club'. Quite Extraordinary. Obviously paying money through the turnstiles, week after week, year after year, does not qualify you. I must say at this point (at the risk of being ostracised by several close friends) that personally, I agree with the Board's recent financial policies. In 1986 we were probably the richest non-League club ever to be relegated. Our wage bill was less than £10,000 and it showed - the team was rubbish. Now the wage bill has gone through the roof - but again, it showed - the team last season was excellent. The money has not been lost, it has been invested - in players. Obviously the Club cannot afford to lose £59,000 a season on a continuing basis, and I can't believe the Board is daft enough to think that it can. Our deepest fear is, essentially, that if such a policy continued the Club would end up in severe financial difficulty and the Directors responsible would then possibly abandon the sinking ship, as has happened at some other clubs. But I believe we are a long way from that yet. The current Board appears to be very ambitious, and I hope they succeed because it is our Club that they are playing with. God help us though, if the time comes when supporters are not able to express their reservations and criticisms of how their Club is being run.

RECLAIM THE GAME !!

We were going to report on the Chairboys Gas trip to the Football Supporters Association Conference at Sheffield in June, but apart from being limited for space, we felt we couldn't do justice to the event following an excellent report in the latest issue of RECLAIM THE GAME. Copies of this are available from The Blues Club Programme Shop on match days at 30p each or you can receive your copy each month by becoming a member of the FSA at a cost of £3 per season from;

P O BOX 11, LIVERPOOL, L26 1XP.

FANZINES

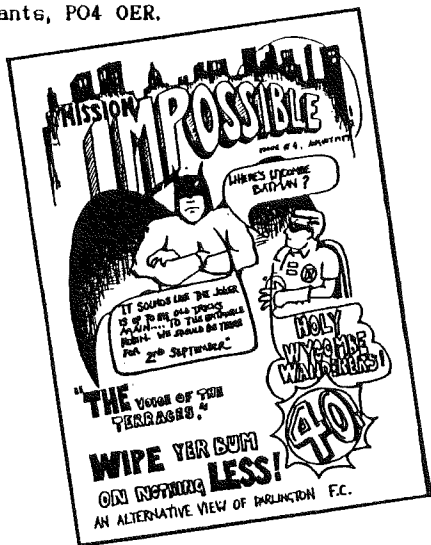
We've received a few more non-League fanzines since the end of last season, including two more additions to the Conference collection (sounds like something out of the Clothes Show).

Demoted DARLINGTON started issuing their fanzine near the end of last season under the title MISSION IMPOSSIBLE but by issue three it had become MISSION TERMINATED, as they looked forward to life in the Conference. The first issue of this season had 'Darlo' fans contemplating how to get to Wycombe for their opening Conference away fixture. Good stuff at 50p plus A5 SAE from; 8 Bramley Parade, Bowesfield Lane, Stockton on Tees, TS18 3JG

Promoted MERTHYR TYDFIL issued their first issue at the end of last season under the clever title of DIAL 'M' FOR MERTHYR. Another good read from a well supported side who should boast attendances where ever they travel. Chairboys Gas met up with the editorial team in Sheffield in the summer where we swapped stories over a few pints - eye opening stuff! 50p plus A4 SAE from; 9 Linden Way, Trefechan, Merthyr Tydfil, Mid Glamorgan, CF48 2EL.

LIGHT AT THE END OF THE TUNNEL is the fanzine of Dartford supporters, now in it's fourth issue. Plenty of reading and humour in this issue where they've worked out why Trevor Gould should not have won The Beazer Homes League Manager of the Year award in 1988 and are also showing some understandable aggrievances that Maidstone United appear to be taking over their home. Latest addition to Watling Street is several hundred yellow tip-up seats in their main stand! Find out more at 50p plus A5 SAE from; 19 The Terraces, Dartford, Kent, DA2 6BX.

Finally a mention for the fanzine of WATERLOOVILLE supporters which has the rather unoriginal title of FOUL. However, inside the publication includes all the necessary ingredients of a Club fanzine. Issue three included a review of Fareham Town's ground that likened their covering to that of Baldock Town's 'petrol station' canopy. "It's this part of the ground that the town's Bus Spotters meet, swapping old tickets and dreaming of the day when a number 47 is re-routed across the pitch" I bet they've got a few stories of our visit there in 1977 in an F A Cup match?. 50p and A5 SAE from; 172, Francis Avenue, Southsea, Hants, PO4 0ER.



BYGONES

with apologies to Victor Lewis Smith,
Paul Sparkes and 'Club X'/Channel 4 TV

BYGONE #1

THE ROTHMANS NEWS!..

THE ROTHMANS NEWS!..

Issued in the 1970's when Rothmans seemingly sponsored all the Leagues outside the Football League. Never actually contained anything on Wycombe but always had plenty of pictures of Tow Law Town, Saltash United and the latest flare sizes at Enfield.

BYGONE #2

THE BERGER PAINTS TANNOY JINGLE!..

THE BERGER PAINTS TANNOY JINGLE!..

A horribly aggravating jingle of the Isthmian sponsors in the late 1970's. Sung by George Melly ("who makes the paint that... blah, blah... Berger, Be..e..rger.. etc) and was supposed to be played at regular intervals over the tannoy at Isthmian League matches. Most clubs had the sense to do this as infrequently as possible except Hayes and Leatherhead who played it 100 times a match.

BYGONE #3

THE GOLA LEAGUE POINTS SYSTEM!!!

THE GOLA LEAGUE POINTS SYSTEM!!!

3 points for an away win but only 2 points for a home win. About as successful as the "no offside from free-kicks" fiasco. Enabled Wealdstone to win the Championship in 1985 despite an abysmal home record (and even more abysmal attendances). Was still in force in 1985-86 where had the standard system applied, Wycombe would not have been relegated.

BYGONE #4

'SILK' FOOTBALL SCARVES!!!

'SILK' FOOTBALL SCARVES!!!

Tacky, badly coloured and printed items popular with football fans in mid-1970's. Worn from the wrist or hanging from the belt along with baggy jeans, platform shoes, tank top jumper etc. I swapped my WW silk scarf for a programme at Cardiff, mainly to avoid a severe beating from a local.

'Bygones' this month by Simon Burrage

We received the above flexi-disc by Sheffield based band BLAMMO during the summer. Worth buying just for the chorus of "If you're a fan, Do what you can, To stop that man, He's called Colin Moynihan". The B side's about Pat Nevin.

When Saturday Comes

WHEN SATURDAY COMES is available on match days from The Blues Club Programme Shop - priced 60p. When segregation is in operation there will be a seller designated to this area.



Fixtures

Saturday 9 September 1989

Boston	Yeovil
Cheltenham	Barrow
Chorley	Welling
Darlington	Telford
Enfield	Runcorn
Kettering	Altrincham
Macclesfield	Farnborough
Merthyr	Barnet
Northwich	Fisher
Stafford	Wycombe
Sutton	Kidderminster

Monday 11 September 1989

Fisher	Enfield
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Tuesday 12 September 1989

Altrincham	Kidderminster
Barnet	Boston
Barrow	Chorley
Darlington	Runcorn
Kettering	Stafford
Macclesfield	Northwich
Telford	Cheltenham
Wycombe	Merthyr

Wednesday 13 September 1989

Farnborough	Sutton
Yeovil	Welling

Saturday 16 September 1989

Chorley	Sutton
Farnborough	Enfield
Kidderminster	Northwich
Runcorn	Merthyr
Telford	Kettering
Welling	Altrincham
Yeovil	Darlington

Monday 18 September 1989

Fisher	Barnet
Northwich	Chorley

Tuesday 19 September 1989

Enfield	Wycombe
Merthyr	Kettering
Runcorn	Macclesfield
Stafford	Barrow
Sutton	Farnborough

Wednesday 20 September 1989

Cheltenham	Yeovil
Welling	Boston

Saturday 23 September 1989

Altrincham	Cheltenham
Barnet	Runcorn
Barrow	Welling
Chorley	Yeovil
Darlington	Stafford
Enfield	Telford
Kettering	Fisher
Macclesfield	Sutton
Merthyr	Boston
Northwich	Farnborough
Wycombe	Kidderminster

Tuesday 26 September 1989

Altrincham	Barrow
Chorley	Darlington
Barnet	Welling
Macclesfield	Cheltenham
Stafford	Runcorn
Telford	Northwich
Wycombe	Fisher

Wednesday 27 September 1989

Boston	Enfield
Farnborough	Merthyr
Yeovil	Kidderminster

Saturday 30 September 1989

Darlington	Kettering
Kidderminster	Chorley
Merthyr	Macclesfield
Sutton	Northwich
Telford	Farnborough
Welling	Enfield
Yeovil	Altrincham

Monday 2 October 1989

Fisher	Boston
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Tuesday 3 October 1989

Barrow	Macclesfield
Kettering	Wycombe
Runcorn	Altrincham

Wednesday 4 October 1989

Farnborough	Barnet
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Saturday 7 October 1989

Altrincham	Farnborough
Barnet	Telford
Barrow	Sutton
Boston	Kidderminster
Cheltenham	Welling
Enfield	Darlington
Fisher	Chorley
Macclesfield	Yeovil
Northwich	Kettering
Stafford	Merthyr
Wycombe	Runcorn

Tuesday 10 October 1989

Boston	Barnet
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Saturday 14 October 1989

Chorley	Enfield
Farnborough	Wycombe
Kettering	Cheltenham
Macclesfield	Stafford
Merthyr	Darlington
Runcorn	Kidderminster
Sutton	Fisher
Telford	Altrincham
Welling	Northwich
Yeovil	Barrow

Tuesday 17 October 1989

Enfield	Boston
Runcorn	Stafford

Saturday 21 October 1989

Altrincham	Boston
Barnet	Macclesfield
Barrow	Yeovil
Cheltenham	Chorley
Darlington	Sutton
Fisher	Runcorn
Kettering	Merthyr
Kidderminster	Farnborough
Northwich	Enfield
Stafford	Welling

Saturday 28 October 1989

Macclesfield	Kettering
Sutton	Telford

Tuesday 31 October 1989

Barnet	Wycombe
Merthyr	Kidderminster
Stafford	Boston